

Combo Pizza

Characters

Kyle : Male, 17 years old. Has a disability that makes him socially and mentally challenged. He acts like he is no older than 10 years old, and has the reading level of a third grader. His parents are divorced, he lives with his mom, but likes being secluded at his dad's. He has a younger sister, Josephine.

Josephine : Female, 15 years old. Mentally gifted . Socially awkward at times, but not necessarily challenged. Parents are divorced, she lives half and half with her mom and dad. Not very close with Kyle, but still very protective. She is trying to make Alyssa, Ryan, and Colton into more understanding people.

Alyssa : Female, 15 years old. Not very open minded, but respects Josephine's opinions. Not very nice, but more considerate than Ryan.

Jamie : Female, 10 years old. Very much like her brother in some aspects, but still very impressionable. Not really popular at her school.

Ryan : Male, 15 years old. Alyssa's friend and is very openly rude. He has dyslexia and is very embarrassed and angry about that. He takes out his anger by mocking people.

Colton: Male, 15 years old. Very wishy-washy with his opinions, likes to agree with the group as a whole. Has a little sister, Jamie.

I would like to thank Prof. Bryan Waite of Utah Valley University for his insight on differences and his quote, "People aren't weird; people are different. And different is good."

Combo Pizza

By Darci Ramirez

Scene 1

(In a school commons area, sounds of lots of teenagers talking. One girl at a table alone, Josephine, reading. Colton, Ryan, and Alyssa go to a nearby table and start talking)

ALYSSA

I KNOW!! What a loudmouthed teacher's pet! It's like she can't shut up for 2 seconds to breathe! She has to store extra air in her big head, 'cuz she talks so much!

RYAN

She must have gotten all of the brains in her family, 'cuz her brother sure as HECK doesn't have any! They have to send him to a dumb kid's – I mean "special kid's" school.

(After a round of laughter, Josephine stands up so quickly that she knocks down her chair. She ignores it and goes over to the table with the other teens with a fake smile)

JOSEPHINE

Hey, guys! What ya talking about?

Colton

(Colton jumps at Josephine's sudden appearance. Very quietly)
Oh, nothing

RYAN

The... basketball game last night. Did you see Adam Lancer? He tripped right after he got the ball and cost the team the game. What a freaking retard...

JOSEPHINE

Sorry, a what?

RYAN

RE-TARD, kiss-up. Your brother's kind of retard. Not like you and your special class, kiss-up, but like he's got to be stopped from eating any more glue ...

(Ryan laughs. Alyssa chokes down a laugh and Colton pretends to giggle.)

ALYSSA

Come on, her brother can READ can't he? Oh my gosh, Jo, don't take it so personally, he didn't mean it, he was just joking. Dang, can you spell "sensitive"...

(A bell rings and Ryan and Alyssa leave. Colton and Josephine are packing up their backpacks)

JOSEPHINE

What was that, Colton? Didn't you hear them? How could you want to hang around them?

COLTON

They were just joking around, it didn't do any harm, just words.

JOSEPHINE

They were making fun of my brother! You've met him, you liked talking to him!

COLTON

It was just a joke. Your brother wouldn't mind.

JOSEPHINE

Because he loves everyone. He can't think of them in a bad way! You guys were picking on one of the kindest people on Earth. Yeah, real funny.

COLTON

I'm sorry, but I don't understand why you're so ticked about this. It's not like I was saying anything. And Ryan wouldn't say that to his face.

JOSEPHINE

What's the difference? You just stood by and took it. And if Ryan can say that so easily here, why not to Kyle's face? I just really hope that you're happy with yourself.

(Josephine storms off, Colton walks in the opposite direction)

Scene 2

(Kyle is onstage, kneeling like he is in front of a TV and muttering to himself)

KYLE

The Steelers are gonna beat them... four more wins and they make it to the semifinals...

(Yelling)

NO! That's a foul! Holding, 15 yard penalty!!!

(Josephine walks in covering her ears, but smiling.)

JOSEPHINE

Hey, Kyle! How's the team doing?

KYLE

This stupid ref is blind! He can't see any-anything in front of him!

JOSEPHINE

He never can...

(beat)

So what's going on with you? I'm staying with dad tonight.

(Kyle looks dejected and uncomfortable.)

KYLE

Oh...

JOSEPHINE

It's ok, I won't invade your cave.

KYLE

Ok, good. I'm doing an assembly at an elementary school with my friends. Oh, and I was working today. Someone did a funny hand sign at me. Then he called me weird.

JOSEPHINE

He probably meant to say different. Different is good.

KYLE

You're weird, too.

JOSEPHINE

Why, thank you, my good sir. By the way, we're getting pizza. What kind do you want?

KYLE

(Absent mindedly, looking back at the game)

Combo. The different stuff tastes good together.

JOSEPHINE

Yeah, it does, doesn't it?

Scene 3

(Josephine is sitting back in a chair alone reading. Ryan comes by and sits next to her. During the dialogue, Josephine keeps scooting away and Ryan keeps following her in his chair.)

RYAN

How's your brother? I heard he got a job. I'm really surprised anyone would hire him. Doesn't he like freak out and throw temper tantrums?

JOSEPHINE

Stop Ryan. Please go away.

RYAN

What? I'm just trying to make conversation. You do enough reading, you show off way to much anyway at class, it's not like anyone is going to like you more if you answer every question so desperately. Just dumb yourself down, ask your brother for tips.

(Josephine puts down her book and turns to Ryan almost aggressively, but tries to look calm.)

JOSEPHINE

Why do you even do this, Ryan? I know you have dyslexia. It's not something to be embarrassed about. Tons of people have it, and it doesn't make you any less than anyone else.

(Ryan stands up very quickly, knocks over the chair, and starts backing away. He is close to, if not, yelling)

RYAN

You don't know ANYTHING. Just shut up and keep your freak brother away from me. Okay?

(Ryan runs offstage and Josephine puts her face in her hands)

Scene 4

(Jamie is walking across the stage with his arms full of miscellaneous stuff. She is struggling to carry it, and Kyle is walking in from the opposite side. Jamie accidentally drops some stuff and starts picking it up.)

KYLE

Do you need some help? Here...

(Kyle helps pick some of the stuff up and holds it.)

JAMIE

Thanks. Hey, weren't you at the assembly today?

KYLE

Um, I think so.

(Kyle looks at a notebook of Jamie's he is holding.)

You like the Steelers?

JAMIE

Yeah! They're my favorite! You?

KYLE

Duh! Whose your favorite player? Mine's –

(Ryan runs in from offstage and stands between Kyle and Jamie, yelling a standing defensively toward Kyle.)

RYAN

What are you doing? Get away from her weirdo! Just get away, okay?

(Ryan shoves Kyle and he drops the stuff and notebook.)

Come on, Jamie, Colton's looking for you.

(Ryan drags Jamie off stage and Kyle stays onstage rubbing his shoulder.)

Scene 5

(Kyle is sitting onstage crying near the TV area, and Josephine runs over and sits next to him.)

JOSEPHINE

Kyle? Kyle, are you okay? Did someone hurt you?

(Kyle talks half whispering and muttering with few understandable words.)

KYLE

Your friend, Ryan... Steelers... he pushed me... Why would he push me? ...

JOSEPHINE

Hey, you're fine. See? Your game's on.

(Josephine goes to turn on the TV, but Kyle shrugs away.)

Do you want some pizza?

(Kyle turns away and keeps crying. Josephine stands up and talks to herself.)

JOSEPHINE

Okay, I'll give you some space. Dang it, Ryan. Why would you DO that? He won't listen to me. But maybe Alyssa... Goodnight, Kyle. Um, feel better.

(Josephine tries to hug Kyle, but he pushes her away. Josephine walks away and Kyle keeps crying)

Scene 6

(Josephine and Alyssa are sitting down on the ground talking)

JOSEPHINE

Ok, wrap your head around this. In space, there is no gravity. That means that there is no common up or down. Someone might look completely upside down to you, but the same thing would be true for them. That someone is different than you, and you to them, but you both need oxygen.

ALYSSA

And this has to do with me because...

JOSEPHINE

Because everyone should be treated with respect even though they see things different.

ALYSSA

English please. And not rocket scientist English, but like my English.

JOSEPHINE

Ok, then... pizza. Combo pizza has all different sorts of stuff on it. They just can't help it. An olive is an olive, pepperoni is pepperoni, and so on. The sausage might say, "Wow, that mushroom looks really weird." But the mushroom is still there and can't help it. Individually, each thing tastes ok. But too much cheese and the pepper gets hurt, the pepper gets sad and leaves and the pizza can't taste as great. But if all the toppings love each other and work together, you get the pizza of awesome friendship.

(Alyssa looks at Josephine funny. Alyssa gets up and starts walking away.)

ALYSSA

You got me at the pizza, you lost me at the talking sausage.

(Josephine gets up and almost shouts at Alyssa.)

JOSEPHINE

Ok, then my brother. You guys are mocking him for things that he really can't help. And those things, if you look at him with love, make him beautiful. They make him different.

(beat)

When no one is different, it's boring and bland. But if you have all the differences with each other, it's exciting and really amazing. Everyone keeps talking about people loving each other. But to do that, we have to stop alienating one another. We have to make the "others" into "us". Embrace the weird. Weird is different, and different is good.

ALYSSA

You really like pizza, don't you?

Ok, I'll talk to Ryan about the jokes and yesterday. But do I have to say all of that?

JOSEPHINE

Nah, he should understand with just the end.

ALYSSA

Then why did you go on with me about Kyle's space pizza?

JOSEPHINE

Ryan will understand what's it's like to feel different.

(Alyssa is about to leave, but she turns back around and looks at Josephine sheepishly.)

ALYSSA

We were sort of making fun of you too, the other day. I'm sorry. And, you know Ryan was just scared, he didn't want to hurt Kyle.

JOSEPHINE

It's okay. I mean, I don't like it, but it's hard to change. Kyle wasn't hurt, just confused. You and Ryan will get the hang of the whole pizza idea. See you later.

(They both smile and wave goodbye and leave opposite sides of the stage.)

Scene 7

(Ryan, Josephine, Colton and Alyssa are waiting for a bus.)

RYAN

All I'm saying is that the bus driver's always late and it may be because he can't keep the time. He's just a senile old man.

(The group looks at him accusingly. He breathes in deeply and says very precisely, as if rehearsed.)

RYAN

I am sorry, that was rude. He is different than me, and different is good. We all have to be an... Awesome Pizza of Friendship.

(beat)

Look, I really am sorry. I'm trying. But do I have to say all of that?

COLTON

Until you let up on the rude jokes.

(Jamie runs up to Colton from offstage, Colton sighs in exasperation.)

Jamie! Did you miss your bus again? Why didn't you call Mom for a ride?

JAMIE

I forgot, ok? It's no big deal. I'm here now. Ooh, and so is the bus.

(Everyone walks offstage like they are going to a bus, but Colton and Jamie stay behind)

JAMIE

We had an assembly the other day, kids from a special school visited. The kids were...

(She looks back to where the other kids left for the bus.)

...REALLY weird.

(Colton pauses and shakes his head and turns to face Jamie fully.)

COLTON

...Not weird, just different. And different's good.